

Class of 1961

Class Agent

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Dear Many Miler:

Greetings and wishes that you are well and enjoying our advanced years!
Feeling very fortunate to be “on the right side of the sod” as Sam Hildebrand would say.



I recently spent a wonderful weekend of Wabash activities...We met John and JoAnn Birdzell at Rick's Café Boatyard on Geist Reservoir for lunch. Nice place to visit and get good food. It was snowing so hard we couldn't see the lake! Next, we drove thru the snow to Crawfordsville and had a wonderful visit with Sam & Susie Hildebrand. Sam cooked up a Gluten Free Pizza along with fine adult beverages from his bar. After a good sleep at the Hampton, I

attended the *J B Bachman Class Agents' Forum* in Hays Hall and it was a good turnout considering the weather.

Later, Barbara joined me for lunch followed by the basketball game for which Birdy and Sam showed up. Wooster was tied with Wabash for the conference lead so the win was very important. The Sphinx Club who makes a lot of noise has about 25 guys in red & White overalls with the white pots! There were about a dozen Sphinx Club pledges performing all sorts of crazy things... It is a proven fact that opposing teams shoot a lower free throw percentage at Chadwick Court!

**2023-24
J.B. Bachman '61 Class Agent
Forum**

Society of Wabash College Class Agents

February 17, 2024

Wabash.



Wabash.

Report from President Scott Feller

Colleges are “under the gun!” “Too Expensive” and “Too much Indoctrination of students.” There are roughly 2000 colleges and universities in the U. S.; Most of the bad publicity arises from about 20 of them. At Yale University, 79% of grades are A or A-! Another issue is that young men are finding other post high school places to go especially in Indiana, where some 45% of eligible are attending college. The ‘Distinctiveness’ of Wabash is a unique advantage.

Yes, all male is one of the items; but Comprehensive Exams (now given after Christmas break before classes begin so it gives anyone who fails a chance to retake during spring break!) The oral exams by faculty are also a unique feature. 40% of Wabash alumni support the College financially and this is much more important than you might expect. It draws attention to how strong Wabash College is and places us in the top 5 in the country!

During Spring Break, Wabash brought 194 young men to the campus for an overnight and to attend classes.

Community Center



Following Commencement and “Big Bash” (5/31-6/2/2024) Sparks Center will be demolished. This is the biggest project in the history of Wabash (some \$80 Million) and will take two years to complete. The spark was \$20 Million of a \$25 Million grant the College received from the Lilly Endowment in December. The HVAC will be upgraded including the underground tunnel. (Don’t ask! I have no idea where it is.) The kitchen in Sparks will be set up temporarily near the Tennis courts. Bon Appetit, the campus food service, will have a load on their hands.

Notice the name of the new facility is “Community” Center. The Lilly Endowment grant program provides funding to encourage Indiana’s colleges and universities to work closely with their communities. The pitch for a new Sparks included

providing a more welcoming place for folks from Crawfordsville and Montgomery County. This includes additional parking on campus. The College is joining other entities in Crawfordsville to build a 124 unit Child Care building on South Grant. This will help the College recruit faculty and other key staff to come to Wabash.

For decades, the College has been feeding off the electrical line which goes to the Donnelly plant. After some failure 3 years ago, Wabash will connect directly to Crawfordsville Power and Light.

I am excited to see the drawings of this new facility. We know that of the *14,869 alumni* (about the size of the freshman class @ Purdue), *46.7%* are actively engaged, *10.6%* are disconnected completely, and *42.7%* are somewhat connected. Obviously, the College wishes to get better connected to the “somewhat connected!”

The Lilly Endowment grant also will fund the establishment of a Latino Community Center at the NW corner of Grant & Wabash Ave (the site where Ed Haenish’s Church of Christ Science was). Wabash and Crawfordsville are experiencing much larger Latin populations. The success of the Malcom X Institute has proven success beyond everybody’s expectation!

Our Many Miler class saw a 42.1% rate of contribution last year. Fijis were tops @ 70% followed by Phi Delts and Kappa Sigs. I hope you can help get us back up to our traditional 50+% during Day of Giving on April 24 or by June 30th.

Sam Hildebrand note to Ted Todd. Hey, Ted: Long time no talk. Last evening our good friend Lore Apple stopped by our front porch fire pit gathering for a touch of wine. During the course of conversation she related that she had taken a random trip to southern Indiana and ended up in Madison. It was her first visit to the old river town and she was charmed by the downtown area and especially your shop. In the course of her visit she learned of all the connections you and Myrna had with Lore’s mother Karen. She was pleased to make your acquaintance and learn more of her mother’s history as well as our connection as Wabash Grads.... After years on bench and some time as a senior judge, it must be fun meeting people in your shop whose agenda is pretty straight forward. It might be more interesting if, in America, haggling with the proprietor for a better price were *de rigueur* instead of ponying up the \$xx,99 as the best price available. On the other hand, our practice allows patrons and owners to have non adversarial conversations that open interesting doors. Hope all is well with you! DePauw to Hell. Sam

Tim Conlon: MB (Mary Beth) and I watch the Oregon Ducks football games, as we have followed them for 30 years. The announcer said he doesn’t feel the enthusiasm of college football when he narrates NFL Games. I have great memories of Indiana autumns with fall colors and small college football pageantry. When we

were seniors, Omer Faust hired me to file football news to the *Indianapolis Star and News*. I learned about Saturday night deadlines. Happy Thanksgiving! All is calm in Bend OR. Heavy snows haven't arrived as yet. Having an older house, we are surrounded by trees. We are "checking our traps" for field mice who have come in from the cold! Thanks again for keeping us remembering Wabash and its excellent education for men, Tim

In February, Richard Reeves delivered a timely talk in the Chapel. He's the author of "*Of Boys and Men; Why the Modern Male is Struggling, Why it Matters, and What to do About It.*"

The Lacrosse team has started with 4 wins and one loss, featuring Jake Pippen as a starting sophomore (Pippen # 5 to attend Wabash.) Pete says his grandson got good grades loves his team and brothers of Sigma Chi! Pete & Janie shivered thru the opening match. Pete reports that their Great Granddaughter was born @ 29 weeks - 2#13oz. She stayed at Ascension/ St. Vincent for 90 days but now is doing very well. Jay & Alley named her after Pete's mother: Vivian.

- Jake Gilbert '98 will return to coach that Little Giant football team this fall as the new defensive coordinator. In 2025, he'll take over for head coach Don Morel who will retire at the end of next season.
- The Wrestling team has had another good year and is sending 6 men to the National Finals.
- Baseball has a good team, but they need some pitching! 4 wins, 4 losses!
- Tennis team has 7 wins 5 losses.
- Swimmers finished a strong third in the conference meet.
- Volleyball has started strong with 13 wins 6 losses.

It was fun to take in a couple of live basketball games. Wabash finished as the champion of the NCAC conference. Of note is that of 22 men on the roster, 20 are from Indiana. They lost the first game of the NCAA Div III playoffs @ Trine U. in Angola in overtime. A good year.

I also must say that spending a Saturday afternoon at the new Wabash football stadium is a big treat! Come join us this fall! One of the big differences in our time and the current time is that the Wabash teams have really big parent following. And, they are avid fans!

Be Healthy and Joyful – while we still can....

Many Miles Before the Night,

J B

Remembrances.....

Charlie Bowerman: Passed 9/2/23

<https://www.moweryfs.com/obituaries/Charles Bowerman-2> previously reported. This is more complete.

William Keith Hayden: Passed 3/3/23

William Keith Hayden, 83, formerly 70 years in North Vernon, now of Columbus, passed from this life at 3:20 a.m. Wednesday, May 3, 2023, at Ascension St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis after a five year battle with cardiac amyloidosis. Mr. Hayden was born July 15, 1939, in Madison. He married Carol Ritter June 11, 1961.

Keith retired from Arvin Industries in 2000 where he served for more than 40 years and he ended his career as the manager of customer service. He is survived by the love of his life, Carol of 61 years; children, Andrew (Mary) Hayden of OH; Pamela (Jeff) Stachelek of S.C., and Douglas (Amy) of Columbus; proud gramps of, Hayley and Heather Hayden, Kayce (Juan) Perez, Hayden and Davis Stachelek; step grandfather of Courtney and Cody Rogers; and great grandfather of, Braedon, Kayleigh, and Gabriel Votor.

He was preceded in death by his mother Hazel Stout Hayden Stults; stepfather Edward Stults and brother, Richard Hayden.

He attended Wabash College on a football scholarship and was a member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity. After college he coached little league baseball, played slow pitch softball, umpired slow pitch softball and several national championship games. His favorite sport to officiate was high school and college football. He enjoyed golf with his buddies, gardening, reading, playing cards and wintering in Arizona. But his favorite pastime was watching his children and grandchildren participate in sports and other activities. Keith was the dad every child and grandchild deserves and the one his were lucky enough to have. "Many will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints in your life". (Eleanor Roosevelt) Keith left giant footprints in many lives.

Richard Lesniak: Passed 10/1/23

Richard J. Lesniak Sr., age 84, of Schererville, IN, passed away on Sunday, October 1, 2023 surrounded by family.

Born in East Chicago, IN on March 29, 1939, to the late Benjamin J. Lesniak and Helen (Gajda) Lesniak, Richard is survived by his wife, Janice (Kmiecik); four children: Linda Kiefer (Charles) of Centennial, CO, Karen Tracy (Gregory) of Galloway, OH, Richard Lesniak, Jr. (Tamera) of Scottsdale, AZ and John Michael Lesniak (Eliza) of Singapore; five grandchildren: Charlie and Michael Kiefer, Rory and Sean Tracy, and Ariana Lesniak; his brother, John Lesniak (Janice, deceased) of Highland, IN, and sister, Margaret Doll (Kenneth, deceased) of Indianapolis, IN; many nieces, nephews and cousins; and one aunt, Lucile Gardner (John, deceased) of LaPorte, IN.

After graduating from Bishop Noll High School, Wabash College and Indiana University School of Law, he began his law career as an Escrow Officer with Chicago Title Insurance and then transitioning to Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for Lake County. Next he joined the private practice firm of Given, Dawson and Cappas in East Chicago and later founded his own firm. While practicing in East Chicago he represented many local government agencies. As the East Chicago School City general counsel for 20 years, he participated in the financing and construction of numerous schools and municipal improvements. Later in his career, he relocated the firm to Schererville and leaned toward family practice. Preparing for retirement, in 2018 he merged into

the offices of Rubino, Rumen, Crosmer and Polen in Dyer, IN. He was a member of the Lake County Bar Association and the Indiana State Bar Association for over 50 years.

In the late '60s and early '70s, he served as the Representative for Lake County in the Indiana House of Representatives. He was the Democrat Caucus Chairman in 1971 and 1972, a member of the Indiana Code Study Commission, and co-sponsor of Indiana Code of 1971.

He was an avid golfer and ballroom dancer, dancing with his wife in numerous amateur ballroom dance competitions across the United States.

Michael Hughes: Passed 12/1/23

Michael Paul Hughes Jr., age 84, passed away on December 1, 2023, at St. Mary's Hospital. He was born on May 3, 1939, to Michael and Ruth (Jones) Hughes in Montclair, New Jersey. Michael married Rosemarie Largura on June 20, 1964, at St. Mark's Catholic Church in Gary, Indiana.

Michael attended Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and graduated in 1961. He then went on to get his PhD at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Family and friends were very important to Michael, even if it was just sitting down over a meal or just having a beer. Going fishing with his children and grandchildren and supporting their activities or sporting events. Papa was the biggest fan for his children and grandchildren. Michael was a giving guy who was very loving and always gave people his time and attention. Michael loved telling stories and making jokes. His wit and humor were appreciated by all who surrounded him. Michael loved everything Irish, including traveling to Ireland and even playing in an Irish band called Americay.

Michael worked at Tri-County Mental Health Clinic, Rock County Family Service, and Beloit Regional Hospice. He volunteered at Bridge Lakepoint Waunona Neighborhood Center, Agrace Hospice, Holy Wisdom Monastery, and was very involved in Social Justice issues. He also enjoyed kayaking, walking, taking Sunday drives, and watching sports in person and on TV.

Michael is survived by his wife of 59 years, Rosemarie; children, Meghan (Larry) True, Jen Hughes, Tony (Kathy) Hughes, Katie (Chad) Stevens; grandchildren, Amy (Andy) Sullivan, Ryan True, Erin (fiancé Colton Purdy) True, Emma True, Abbey Hughes, Alexis Hughes, Kai Stevens, brothers Jim (Diane) Hughes and Bill (Christine) Hughes, and Brother-In-Law Aldo (Rebecca) Largura, nieces and nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Jim Davidson: passed 6/10/23

James Lawson Davidson III., age 83, of Indian Head Park; beloved husband of Carol Davidson; loving brother of Deborah (Kent) Fisher & the late John Davidson; dear brother-in-law of Holly (Charles) Self.

Jim was born and raised in Marshall, MI where he graduated high school with honors. He then graduated from Wabash College in Crawfordsville, IN with a Bachelor's degree. He went on to the Kellogg School of Business at Northwestern University in Chicago, and graduated with an MBA in Marketing.

Jim served in the Navy as Lieutenant J.G. for 4 years on the USS Cowell DD-547. After his time in the Navy, he grew his career in marketing and advertising working for Alberto-Culver, Cunningham & Walsh, Bender Browning, & Euro Taitham. He was a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity in Kane County, and at the Hinsdale Historical Society for many years. After retirement, Jim started his own handyman business and had great success. He loved golf, sports car racing, making stained glass windows, and woodworking.